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Housekeepers' Chat

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Friday, June 14, 1929

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Betty Lou Plans a Company Supper." Memo and recipe from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

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Betty Lou invited me over to supper the other night. Remember Betty Lou? She's the little girl who decided, a year ago, that she wanted to learn to cook, and plan meals. Since then she has prepared so many meals, she says she feels like a veteran.

"It's a good thing I like cooking," she told me. "For certainly I have plenty of it to do this month -- I'm chief cook and bottle washer, while Mother's on her vacation. I'm making something new tonight, Aunt Sammy. Ever hear of Tomato Cheese Whoopee?"

I admitted I never had.

"Oh, it's a grand dish!" said Betty Lou. "You really ought to have it for broadcasting. Just wait till you've tasted it, Aunt Sammy! You want to know what else I'm having for supper? Green peas, lemonade, and strawberry shortcake."

"Well, Betty Lou's Tomato Cheese Whoopee was so appetizing, that I asked her for the recipe -- there's no use keeping a perfectly good recipe under cover. Would you like to write her menu, before you take the recipe? It's a good menu for summer: Tomato Cheese Whoopee, Green Peas, Lemonade, and Strawberry Shortcake.

There are ten ingredients in the Tomato-Cheese dish -- I'll read slowly, so that you can get every ingredient. Everybody ready? Then let's write:

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| 2 tablespoons butter | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1/2 cup finely cut celery | 1 pint tomato pulp and juice |
| 1/2 green pepper, chopped fine | 1/2 pound cheese, flaked |
| 1/4 cup chopped onion | 2 eggs beaten, and |
| 2 tablespoons flour | A few dashes of tabasco |

Ten ingredients -- I'll read them again, just to be sure nothing was missed: (Repeat ingredients).

Melt the butter in a heavy skillet. Add the celery, pepper, and the onion. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Sprinkle the flour over these seasonings, quickly pour in the tomato, and then add the cheese and salt. Cook over low heat, until the mixture thickens and the cheese is melted. Pour some of this mixture into the well-beaten eggs, then pour all back into the skillet, and continue to cook over low heat until thickened and creamy. Add the tabasco and serve on crisp slices of toast or heated crackers.

The Strawberry Shortcake was made according to Betty Lou's standard biscuit recipe -- with the addition of one or two tablespoons of sugar to the flour mixture, and one or two extra tablespoons of shortening. The biscuit dough, for short cakes, may be baked in a big round cake, or as individual servings. Betty Lou baked hers in individual servings, cutting the dough with a large biscuit cutter. While the biscuits were hot, she split and buttered them, and placed sweetened crushed strawberries between and on top.

I'll repeat this menu -- just to make sure everybody has it: Tomato Cheese Whoopee; Green Peas; Lemonade, with sprigs of mint in the glasses; and Strawberry Shortcake.

For the rest of the time, let's talk about children's parties. As some one said the other day, "there's something about a party that puts a bit of magic into life. It doesn't matter whether you serve potato soup or pink cakes and ice cream. . . . We shouldn't wait until we are 'house-perfect' to entertain friends young or old. If we do, life will fly by and we'll discover some time that we have missed something."

Well, let's have a party for the children. I read something this month which sounded practical and interesting. "When the Children Entertain" is the title -- perhaps you read it, too.

"One of the most difficult menus for any hostess to plan is the luncheon or supper for the children's party," says the author, whose name I do not know. "The dishes must be simple and filling, yet have a party air about them. The desserts, especially, must be festive, and yet they must not, for the sake of digestions and doctor bills, be unusually rich. Perhaps the surest way of making the affair seem a party, is through the decoration of the dishes as well as the decoration of the table itself.

"For instance, for a late spring luncheon for children of ten to fourteen years, the menu might be a milk chicken soup with rice, small chicken cutlets, spinach, mashed potatoes, ice cream and sponge cake. This sounds prosaic, but the soup is served in the nicest of soup cups, and on its top floats the initial of the child served. (Alphabetical noodles contain all the letters.)

"With the soup, is served a crisp little dough man, cut from pie dough and baked to golden brownness on a hot, greased baking sheet. Give this little man a smile of grated cheese, and three buttons down his front of the same. These will be yellow, when baked, and a delicious addition to the soup course.

"The cutlets should be smartly dressed with the little frills of paper intended for chops. Frills of different colors should be used, stuck firmly on the chop over a toothpick. Each young guest's name might be written on his cutlet frill-- the deed of a minute to the hostess just before she carries in the plates bearing the main luncheon course. On this plate, besides the cutlet, there should be a small ramekin of spinach, (children will eat things from a ramekin which they would scorn from a plate.) This may be a paper cup ramekin, or one of the little china ones, but if of

paper, some appropriate remark might be written across it. The spinach itself, piled steaming hot into the ramekin, should have a sprinkling of grated hard cooked egg to take away the prosaic and familiar green effect. The mashed potatoes, alas, cannot be disguised, but they should be heaped steaming hot, with a little butter atop them. No hungry child will need urging!

"With the ice cream course, there are many opportunities of adding novelty and charm to the occasion. Favor stores, five-and-ten cent stores, the paper novelty counters of department stores, all carry unique little dishes in which this favorite party dessert may be served, or it may be bought in brick form or bought plain and put in fancy molds at home, or bought already molded in any of a variety of shapes, or, if it is made at home, it can be piled into little molds buried in ice and served turned out on a fancy lace paper doily on the dessert dish. Then remember that besides plain vanilla ice cream, and the ordinary brick variety, you can order interesting mixtures such as pistachio nut cream, chocolate and walnut, maraschino and peach, hazelnut ice cream, orange, lemon, strawberry and pineapple creams and many others, as well as ices.

"Plain sponge cake is suggested because a simple cake is advisable, and with this many variations are possible: coconut icing, orange, lemon or strawberry icing, a white icing with an initial of the guest in a color, etc."

Before I read the last of this article, get your pencils, for here are three fine party menus for children:

First: Creamed chicken, baked potato, string beans in ramekin, raisin cake, maple ice cream, and milk to drink.

Second: Little individual meat pies, creamed potatoes, peas in ramekin, orange ice cream, chocolate cookies, and milk.

Third: Scrambled eggs on boiled rice, carrots and peas in ramekin, brown bread and butter sandwiches, frozen fruit pudding, and gingersnaps.

And that's all, for today.

Monday: "Summer Frocks for Little Girls." Program includes menu and two new recipes, one for Veal Loaf, and one for Chocolate Custard.

